



Operation RIO Update

Helping Iraqis rebuild Iraq

12 Sep 2003

CPA Headquarters, Baghdad
Army Corps of Engineers Photo.

An update for all SWD employees and Operation RIO volunteers supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Mission Update: Repairs to the damaged pipelines reported in last week's update continue on schedule. In spite of the damage, production levels have remained fairly constant at about 1.5 million barrels per day -- exceeding current goals. However, due to intermittent electrical power and inability to export through Turkey, the refineries have not been able to operate at peak efficiency so refined product levels have decreased. KBR has begun an urgent mission to import diesel fuel in the north to meet demand. We also continue to import LPG and Benzene.

TF RIO was recently assigned the additional mission of national retail distribution. Details are sketchy at this point as to what this really means, but it is likely we will require assistance from outside agencies such as the Defense Logistics Agency and perhaps one or more of the major oil companies. More detail to follow as it becomes available.

Scheduled for Deployment: No employees are scheduled to deploy this week.

Team RIO continues to need good Corps employees to fill important jobs. It is an excellent time to gain project manager or PDT experience in a historic mission environment. Contact Linda Ranallo (214) 767-2385 or Jim Barton (214) 767-2370 to discuss deployment opportunities currently available or to add your name to the list of volunteers. Supervisory approval is required.

FEST Rear news: Odessa Fielder, Fort Worth District, received the Commander's Award for Civilian Service from COL Schultz in recognition of her achievements and dedication to providing administrative support as a member of Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil-Rear.

A view from down range: PAT LINGO

Article and photo by Steve Wright

Pat Lingo volunteered for Operation Iraqi Freedom as soon as she heard about the Corps involvement. However, she didn't immediately get her chance to come to Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO).

"When I first heard about it, I was disappointed that I didn't get to come immediately with the advance team. Two months later, in April, I finally arrived in Kuwait to work as a secretary to General Crear and Colonel Jenkins," Lingo said.

"I saw it as a rare opportunity, a chance to give something back to America, I thought I'd never get this chance again so I wanted to do it. If I ever get the chance to deploy again, I will. My family thought I'd lost my mind when I volunteered, then they were proud of me."



"I like this country and was very impressed with the Iraqi people. They were interesting to me and very excited to see us. I believe things haven't changed fast enough for them, and that we haven't met their expectations. They thought once Saddam was gone, and we were there everything would change. But things take time. The Iraqi people are looking to us to make changes and they are willing to take the responsibility for the changes as they happen."

"I'm looking forward to getting home and seeing my kids, daughter, 26, son 30, and stepson, 19, and the dog. Of course, I will bring them back local items for gifts."

"I've loved shopping here, but as a shopper, I'm not in the same class as Deedee (Hurd, RIO team member from Tulsa District). She is a power shopper. Things just wouldn't have been nearly so much fun without her."

"I enjoyed seeing Basrah (largest city in southern Iraq), but the best part of being here has been the Arabic people. They were very warm and welcoming to us. Also, getting off base was important. It allowed us to experience first hand how the people here live. By the way, the local food is great!"

A view from down range: Jim Cook

Story by Wayne Stroupe

When Jim Cook, the alternate administrative contracting officer for Task Force Restore Iraqi Oil (RIO) talks about his work in Iraq, he talks about hope in the future for the Iraqi people.

"I'd like to come back in two years to see a new country. I met a lot of good people in Iraq," said Cook. "But there are some bad ones, too."



Cook has been assisting RIO contracting chief Cheryl Hodge-Snead in contracting more than \$900 million in work to support the various missions of Task Force RIO. "I've never dealt with this large of dollar amounts in a contract, nor the magnitude and complexity. The military aspects were also different than I was accustomed to," said Cook.

A team leader/contracting officer in the Nashville District's Contracting Division, Cook brought experience and expertise to the complex contracting missions of Task Force RIO.

"When we first got there, it was a shambles. The staff was working the contract actions related to the war, and it was all mostly manila files. The office was tiny, we shared PCs, and the staff was about half military and half civilians," said Cook. "Now the files are all set up, the procedures are much better and in place, and we're under control, more or less. We've made great progress."

The contracting office mainly was handling three general purpose task orders under the contract. The first was the repair and reconstruction of all damaged Iraqi pipelines and oil infrastructure. Another task order provided all of the office space, transportation, supplies, housekeeping and other logistical items for all three RIO offices. The final task order covered all the importation and transportation of fuel and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for the Iraqi people to use for cooking, transportation and other purposes.

"It was very challenging due to the complexity of the contract and the vagueness of the scopes of work in the task orders. Just transporting the fuel for the Iraqi people's use was costing millions of dollars a day, and sometimes we didn't get our required funds in until almost midnight," said Cook.

With things going well with RIO contracting at Camp Doha in Kuwait, Cook moved to Kirkuk in northern Iraq as a contract specialist to support the RIO Northern Area Office.

"I became close to some of the Iraqis in the Kirkuk area. We were dealing with the Northern Iraqi Oil Company, both Kurds and Arabs. Our joint committee had four Corps representatives, six contractor representatives, and 20 from the Northern Oil Company," said Cook. This committee helped facilitate a new pipeline crossing of the Tigris River, construction of a new 50-kilometer pipeline, and reconstruction of a lot of the Iraqi oil and LPG production infrastructure in the northern area.

Cook was worried about the security issues in Iraq and still is.

"I remember the first time I went into Iraq in late May near the Basrah oil refinery area. The people were the poorest of the poor, living in huts. However, I am more afraid in some U.S. cities than in Iraq. Security was the number one priority and still is. Once something is fixed, we have to stop the terrorism and attacks on the oil infrastructure. It is only hurting the Iraqi people."

Cook deployed on May 4 and returned to the states on Sep. 6. In that time, he lost 25 to 30 pounds and his blood pressure went down from 140. Iraq may be the new health spa site for the future!

Cook said he has 42 years of government service, including 30 years with the Nashville District.

"I wanted to come for Operation Desert Storm in the early 1990s, but didn't make it. Since I had never seen the desert and am nearing retirement, I thought I would come on over for this one. However, some of my friends asked why I didn't just get some desert camo uniforms and go to Las Vegas," Cook joked.

There were some problems relating to deployment that face all personnel. Cook said he missed his mom, friends, his cat, and fishing with his ex-boss. But since he is planning to take some time off to visit family and friends on his return, Cook said, "We'll make it all up when I get back!"

When asked if he would deploy to Iraq again or if he would recommend deployment to other Corps team members, Cook mulled the question over before answering.

"If they say they need me, I'd go back. If they just need a body, no. Those willing to sacrifice, that have a good attitude and are coming to work – come on!"

Iraqi Webpage: If you enjoy the vignettes or want to learn more about the Corps mission to Iraq, go to www.usace.army.mil and click on the Iraqi Mission icon. The vignettes, other mission summaries as well as photographs are posted.

September 11 Moment of Remembrance: It's been two years since we joined together to leverage our passions to assist in providing the American public a bit of insight into what we knew to be a defining moment of time. As has been said so many times before, our world changed on September eleventh and that passion has spread throughout the nation. We know in our hearts that our new world will be a better place. We know because we saw the seeds being planted by the New York City Firemen and Police, by the Corps Structural Engineers, by the search and rescue teams and especially by the people of New York. I know we are proud to have been part of that team and our mementos are those memories -- not of being suddenly summoned to witness something great and horrendous, but of making a small contribution to the nation's well-being by representing the United States Army Corps of Engineers. On a more personal note, you were all there when I needed your support and your strength. I will never be able to express my appreciation to you (and the many others). Just know, that you all will always be in my thoughts and my prayers.

Larry Rosenberg

New England District PAO

Larry Rosenberg was the Public Affairs Team Chief as part of the Army Corps of Engineers response team to New York City. This was the message he sent to fellow Corps team members on the second anniversary.

"HOOAH!!"

MICHAEL L. SCHULTZ, COLONEL, EN

Acting Commander,

Southwestern Division